

I have been appalled at Republican efforts to eliminate the safeguards against media consolidation. The recent decision by Sinclair Broadcasting's to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example how dangerous these right-wing efforts are.

The public airwaves are used free of charge, and are supposed to serve the public interest. It is essential to democracy that a small number of people are not allowed to control as important a resource as the airwaves to promote a one-sided political agenda. This is usually associated with dictatorships in 3rd world countries, although America seems to be heading in that direction. The current president has already stated publicly (and with obvious envy) that a dictatorship would be a lot easier to govern. Media consolidation is one step in that direction.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.